

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The rejection of Claims 1-5, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully traversed.

The principal reference, JP 4-44581, teaches nothing more than what is disclosed in the paragraph at the bottom of page 4 of Applicants' specification. With the construction taught by the Japanese reference, a higher antivibration effect can be obtained only by increasing the thickness of the antivibration resin material. However, the antivibration resin material increased in thickness causes a problem of deterioration in the object holding force due to resulting increased softness or flexibility, which is likely to cause a wobbling movement of the object in the curved wall.

While Basickes et al., a secondary reference relied upon in the rejection, discloses a holder having ribs, there is no suggestion whatsoever in this reference of applying an antivibration material.

Although the rejection does not explicitly state this, it appears that the rejection is relying upon Larmande et al. to support the contention that it would be obvious to use a coating of antivibration material at any desired

location of a clamp. However, the prior art is devoid of any teaching or suggestion of Applicants' discovery of how to hold an object with a sufficient holding force, while, at the same time, providing a high antivibration function.

More particularly, as pointed out in the specification in the paragraph bridging pages 8-9, in Applicants' invention, antivibration material interposed between the recess of a curved wall and a pipe or the like can provide a high antivibration function to eliminate abnormal noises caused by vibrations of the pipe or the like. In Applicants' invention, the tops of ribs are in contact with the pipe or the like through the antivibration material, and the rigidity of the ribs allows the pipe or the like to be held with a sufficient holding force. In Applicants' invention, even if a strong force is applied in the axial direction of the pipe or the like, acting on the antivibration material as a peeling force, the antivibration material covering the ribs is firmly fixed on the inner wall surface of the curved wall to resist against the peeling force.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 recites that both the inner wall surface of the curved wall and the ribs of the curved wall have a coating thereon of an antivibration material made of soft resin. There is no such teaching or

suggestion in the prior art. Claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon should be allowed.

With regard to dependent Claim 2, it should be noted that this claim recites that each of the ribs includes a top portion having a length equal to the width of the curved wall, and a root portion on the inner wall surface, each of opposite longitudinal ends of each rib being tapered in such a manner that the length of the root portion becomes shorter than the width of the curved wall. As pointed out in the specification in the first complete paragraph on page 9, this construction allows the antivibration material to be coated thicker, with higher peeling resistance, at the respective root portions at opposite ends of each of the ribs, so that the risk of peeling is further reduced. Nowhere is there any such teaching or suggestion in the prior art.

Like Claim 1, Claim 9 recites that the inner surface of the curved wall and the ribs have a coating thereon of antivibration material. This combination provides superior object-holding ability along with superior antivibration as noted earlier. Accordingly, Claim 9 should be allowed.

Claims 6 and 11, which were merely objected to, have been rewritten in independent form. These claims and dependent Claims 7 and 8 should now be allowed.

The Response to Arguments on page 3 of the Office Action alleges that Applicant states that the use of a coating of antivibration material is new. Applicants made no such assertion. The broad use of antivibration material is not new. What is new is the particular claimed combination of a curved wall, ribs, and antivibration material that provides superior object-holding ability along with superior antivibration.

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance.

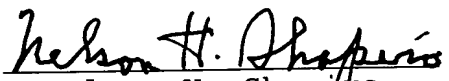
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

NHS:kss

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